

PLANNERS ACCEPT BRONX CO-OP CITY

Reject Protests on Housing at Freedomland Site

The construction of 15,500 co-operative apartments on the site formerly occupied by Freedomland in the Bronx won the approval of the City Planning Commission yesterday. The \$300 million project, known as Co-op City, will be sponsored by the United Housing Foundation.

The commission asked, however, that some apartments be reserved for rentals of \$18 to \$20 a room a month, to permit a greater spread in rentals than the present contemplated range of \$20 to \$26 a room a month.

In addition, the commission called on the sponsor to consider making some of the apartments in the development "available at approximately low-rent housing levels."

Board of Estimate action still will be required to authorize the project.

In approving the project, the city planners overrode some objections to the development that were raised at a public hearing on April 28.

Design Criticized

At that hearing the Municipal Art Society criticized the design, argued that it would be an "economic ghetto" and would overload highways in the area. The American Institute of Architects contended that "the spirits of the tenants would be dampened and deadened by the paucity of their environment."

The design also was criticized by the Metropolitan Committee on Planning.

But last night Herman J. Lessor, project architect, said present plans called for three architectural designs, "which are intended to lend interest and variety to the over-all architectural plan."

The development, he said, will be "almost entirely self-contained, with six neighborhood shopping centers and its own central power plant, which will provide the complex with electricity, heat and central air-conditioning."

The commission asked the sponsor to confer with the Transit Authority on providing adequate bus service to the area and called on the Department of Commerce to try to attract industry to the area just north of the project site.

The site is bounded by the New England Thruway, Givan Avenue, Connor Street, the Hutchinson River, the New Haven Railroad, Hunter Avenue and the Hutchinson River Parkway.

Waits on Seward Plan

In another action the commission reserved decision after holding an extended hearing on the controversial \$50 million Seward Park Extension urban renewal project, designed to redevelop a 14-block blighted section bounded by Essex, Grand, Willett and Delancey Streets.

To an objection of a group of Lower East Side residents that the project would result in the bulldozing of the Downtown Talmud Torah, Herbert B. Evans, chairman of the Housing and Redevelopment Board, suggested that the plans be modified to permit the structure to remain.

Mr. Evans urged the commission to approve the renewal plan, as did the Community Council of Greater New York. Opponents included the Metropolitan Council on Housing, which argued that the plan would "hasten disruption of the community."

The commission approved a Federally-aided public housing project to be called the East Tremont-Boston Road Area. It will rise within the Bronx Park South Urban Renewal Area on the west side of Boston Road between East 178th Street and East Remont Avenue, the Bronx.